in the other way, they need only be somewhat broken down, and they may be removed by the strainer when the active principle has been dissolved and extracted from them.

It remains to show that the employment of heat in the preparation of blistering plaster has other advantages. Damp is a great enemy to the balance of the elementary affinities in the fly. I have found that powder of cantharides which contained merely their usual quantity of moisture when put into a glass bottle and well closed up with a glass stopper, acquired an intolerable fœtor after some months. The powder exhaled ammonia; for when a slip of paper wet with dilute nitric acid was let down into it, white fumes were abundantly produced. This proves decomposition. The smell of ammonia was even recognizable in the fœtor. Long before this period the powder had become mouldy.

We know also that blistering plaster always becomes mouldy when any moisture had been left in its ingredients. Suet and hog's-lard put up in a moist state become mouldy; but both of them keep better, and the former for a long time perfectly well, when moisture has been carefully excluded.

Thus moisture is detrimental to all the ingredients of blistering plaster; and hence every precaution ought to be taken to expel it. This will best be done by heating the fatty materials melted with the resin to the temperature of 250°; the water will have bubbled off in steam when this degree has been attained. If powder of cantharides, in its ordinary state of dryness, be thrown into the fats heated to this temperature, there will be a sudden, copious, and long-continued extrication of steam bubbles, although the powder had been to all appearance dry.

These observations afford the principles on which blistering plaster of due activity and of a comparatively imperishable kind may be formed. The process is this:—Introduce the resin and fats into a proper vessel: melt them; throw in the powder of cantharides; stir the mixture continually until a thermometer immersed in it indicates that the temperature has risen to 250°. Remove the vessel from the fire, and, if the cantharides are not to be strained off, continually stir the ointment. By these means, all the water will have been expelled from the fats, the resin, and the cantharides: and a plaster will be obtained much less liable to injury from being kept than the common.

The employment of a high temperature, in the preparation of blistering plaster, has several beneficial effects. It causes the solution of the vesicating principle in the fats, thus producing a blister more certain in its operation. It expels the water which naturally exists in all the ingredients of blistering plaster, and endangers its spoiling if long kept.

While I am on this subject it may be proper to allude to a proposal which has been made of a method of obviating strangury arising from the action of blisters. It consists in boiling the cantharides in water previously to their being pulverized, and drying them. After this, it is said they no longer possess the injurious property.—*Ibid.*, from *Dublin Medical Press*, August 19, 1840.

MEDICAL PATHOLOGY AND THERAPEUTICS AND PRACTICAL MEDICINE.

15. *Spasmodic Affection of the Larynx and its Appendages cured by the External Application of Veratria.* By Dr. James Tunstall.—Mrs. S., ætat. 44, widow, of a leucophlegmatic habit, spare frame, short stature, schoolmistress, when young had a violent and dangerous attack of pleurisy, the bleedings necessary for the cure of which, "left her in such a weak state that she considers herself never to have regained her strength, and to this she attributes the violent attacks which are more immediately to engage our attention.

"Suddenly, and without previous premonitory symptoms, she is seized with a sense of suffocation, the whole of the muscles employed in respiration are put into violent and convulsive action, the lower extremities become cold, the face purple, the jugular veins enlarge and feel cordy to the touch; the whole surface is bedewed with cold perspiration, and the countenance is expressive of death-like agony. She is perfectly sensible during the whole attack, having never been feverish or delirious. The fit terminates usually in ordinary dyspnœa, which lasts for hours or even days, according to the violence of the attack, leaving her in her usual health.

"The pulse during the attack is but little affected, either in force or frequency of beat; examination of the chest by auscultation shows that the air does not permeate more than about one-third of each lung, no sound being detected lower than the fifth or sixth rib on each side; this sound is the crepitating rattle, giving place, as the fit subsides, to a general bellows sound throughout the lungs; the heart is smaller than natural; it labours as though its action had been weakened by the too frequent and indiscriminate abstraction of blood, but it affords no abnormal sounds; the pulse is about 60, varying to 75.

"On examining her arms, few veins are discoverable, and these mere threads; each presents numberless scars caused by the lancet in every direction, hand, fore-arm, and elbow, while numerous scars from cupping encompass the neck, back, and chest.

"In June, 1840, I was requested to visit her: she was then labouring under one of her attacks which were described to me as asthmatic; on asking where the constriction existed, she clasped her throat. I carefully examined her, and felt convinced that it was a case of spasmodic affection of the laryngeal nerves.

"Upon inquiry I found that every variety of depletion and counter-irritation had been employed; that the strongest opiates and antispasmodics had failed in procuring the slightest mitigation of the symptoms, which could only be expected from time and the most perfect rest. I found that the usual cause of the attack was violent mental emotion, or any over-exertion in her duties as schoolmistress."

Believing that the disease depended upon an undue nervous excitability of the superior and cervical portion of the spinal marrow, Dr. T. "prescribed a scruple of veratria to one ounce of simple cerate, and directed that a small portion should be applied on each side of the cervical vertebræ, and rubbed well into the neck throughout its whole extent twice a day. About a fortnight after commencing its employment, she had an attack of what she said would have been her old complaint, but she repeated the ointment as soon as she felt it coming on, and it terminated in simple dyspnœa, without spasm or expectoration, in an hour or two.

"She persisted in its use about two months, during which time she had several attacks of winter catarrh, but without spasm; she discontinued its employment in December, and from the 21st of October, the day on which it was first prescribed, to the 20th of June, she had no return whatever of her spasms, but recovered her health so well that she was enabled to walk eight miles without assistance, whereas, previously to its use, she rarely if ever left her residence, as it always induced a return of the spasm."—*Prov. Med. and Surg. Journ.*, August 14, 1841.

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16. *Diacetate of Lead in Internal Hemorrhage.*—Mr. Sweeting is of opinion that this remedy has been administered in inefficient doses, and with objectionable combinations. Mr. S.'s practice is to give it in five grain doses every two, three, or four hours, according to circumstances. "The last case," he observes, "in which I employed the diacetate was one of uterine hemorrhage consequent upon abortion. The woman had miscarried the day before I saw her; she had lost a large quantity of blood, and the hemorrhage was still going on; she was pale, restless, sick, and the pulse scarcely perceptible at the wrist.

"I immediately gave her five grains of the diacetate dissolved in distilled water, and repeated it every hour for twelve consecutive hours, and, upon an abatement of the hemorrhage, continued it every four hours for the next twenty-four; the woman recovered.

"The diacetate should be rubbed up with a few drops of concentrated pyroligneous acid, in order to insure a complete solution of any carburate of lead,